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GOVERNMENTS MARK OFFICIAL OPENING OF NEW WHITEHORSE SHIPYARDS PARK BUILDING

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WHITEHORSE (May 2, 2008) – City of Whitehorse and governments of Yukon and Canada today marked the official opening of the new Shipyards Park Building, in the municipal park of the same name.

"Our government supports a vision for a new North that realizes its full economic potential, ensuring that Northerners see the clear results of our Northern Strategy," said Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Chuck Strahl. "Developing the Whitehorse waterfront will promote the vitality of the City, improve the lives of its residents and showcase Whitehorse to Yukon visitors."

The $1.3 million project is an integral component of the $22 million Whitehorse and Carcross Waterfront Project, which is jointly funded by Canada and Yukon under the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund (CSIF).

"The Shipyards Park Building is a good example of collaboration between the Government of Canada, the Government of Yukon, the City of Whitehorse, the Ta'an Kwach'an First Nation and the Kwanlin Dun First Nation on a project that will benefit the entire community, strengthen areas vital to sustaining economic growth and enrich the daily life of Yukoners," commented Glenn Hart, Minister of Community Services with the Yukon government, on the significance of the Whitehorse waterfront.

"The waterfront is an area celebrated for its links to the past when it served as a major cultural and historical link through Yukon's waterways," said Hart. "Development projects like this will ensure that the waterfront is also a place to celebrate for the future, enabling cultural activities, community gatherings and providing new tourism opportunities through enhanced urban development."

"The City of Whitehorse sees the Shipyards Park Building as an integral part of riverfront development," said City of Whitehorse Mayor Bev Buckway. "It provides wonderful amenities within the Shipyards Park as a festival and meeting place."

The City of Whitehorse will continue to develop this area of the waterfront and plans to landscape around the newly constructed building in 2008.

Backgrounder

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The Shipyards Park Building establishes an anchor point for riverfront development along the Yukon River in downtown Whitehorse. The building, designed by Architect Charles McLaren, represents a period of Whitehorse's transportation history.

The new structure will provide an indoor meeting place for cultural events, community events and for drop-in use within the Shipyards Park area. The Fireweed Community Market Society is housed in the building, and operates a concession area. Public washrooms are available during normal operational hours.

Among others, the Whitehorse Waterfront Development projects include the recent upgrades to First Avenue and the Riverfront Wharf, which is currently under design.

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